

Users Executive Committee **meeting** **minutes** for July 22, 2016

The **meeting**, chaired by Bill Louis, began at 8:30. Jesus Orduna, Thomas Strauss, Minerba Betancourt, Sarah Lockwitz, Ed Kearns, Eric Prebys, Sebastian Aderhold, Kim Pearce, Fernanda Garcia, Griselda Lopez, Katie Yurkewicz, and Linda Spentzouris attended the **meeting**. Tim Meyer was also present, representing the Directorate.

Overview

Bill Louis gave the chair report, and ran the **meeting**. The nomination deadline for **UEC** member candidates was July 8th. The **UEC** elections will begin on August 1st, and continue for about three weeks, ending around August 19th. Fermilab employees and visitors can vote. So far, there are 15 nominations for new members. Some additional candidate nominations have been submitted, those people will have to be contacted to see if they are willing to run. Sarah volunteered to help with processing election results.

Minerba started a discussion by noting that there have been complaints that the Wilson Hall bathrooms are not being cleaned often enough. In particular, Monday mornings are sometimes bad because the bathrooms have been used all weekend, and sometimes there is a further delay due to a Monday holiday. Cleaning on Monday morning would be better than Monday afternoon, but only one person from the cleaning crew is there early on Monday. Certain floors need service more than others. Tim said that adjusting the cleaning schedule could potentially solve the problem rather than increasing the number of times the bathrooms are cleaned.

Improvement effort for ServiceNow tool provided by SCD

Marcia Teckenbrock, Margaret Miller, and Panagiotis Spentzouris, representing the Scientific Computing Division (SCD), reported on a project to make the ServiceNow tool easier to use. ServiceNow is an infrastructure tool that was purchased from an outside vendor. The division is working with an outside consultant to improve the interface. SCD is reaching out to get feedback from their customers, especially those who are not on site.

There are three ways to get help with computing issues: sending email, making a phone call, or using the web interface (ServiceNow). The web interface improvement project is scheduled to be complete by spring 2017. In a month or so there will be a binning exercise, to determine how to best organize the content of the interface. This would benefit from user input; this input is needed to ensure that the organization of the help pages match up with how users think. Eric made the point that there is a huge problem with stale help pages, and that it is desirable to scrub the documentation. Since there is stale information, now people start with Google, rather than going to the service desk pages first. He also pointed out that summer students and other people not permanently

on site need their computing tools to be working quickly since they have so little time to complete their projects. Some of the summer students are only on site for 10 weeks. Ideally, ServiceNow would be easy for such short-term users to navigate quickly. Margaret informed the UEC that there is a different project in progress to deal with the issue of stale information. She and Marcia said they would like people who work with transients to help advise on interface improvements. There will be a 'search' button available to all users to help make the process of finding the right help faster.

SCD will send out a link and ask people to complete the exercise found there. Then the results will be aggregated to make an interface that is much easier to use. Once the new ServiceNow is formulated, they will look for feedback, and iterate if needed. The walk-in desk will not change, and services will not be changed. In order to volunteer to do the feedback survey, email Marcia at marcia@fnal.gov. The survey was closed the previous week, but it could be made live all the time. It was requested that in that case, the survey be optional, and not a pop up.

Saturday Morning Physics program

Erik Ramberg reported on the Saturday Morning Physics (SMP) program, run by himself, Spencer Pasero, and Roger Dixon (who would like to retire). Erik came to talk about the Saturday Morning Physics program because it is in transition, and suggestions from the UEC were encouraged. The program serves primarily juniors and seniors from local high schools that are within a 20-mile radius of Fermilab, but some students come as far away as other nearby states. SMP is a huge boost to the lab's connection to the local community. SMP is a nine-week course, and there are three sessions offered each year. The program graduates about 150-200 people per year. Attendance of seven out of nine lectures is required for graduation. Some schools give credit for SMP. The program was ranked between 4 and 4.5 on a scale of 5 in a survey of the students.

Leon brought the idea to Fermilab in 1980, and it nurtured the concept of the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA). In the early days Drasko Jovanovic, who was loved by the students, ran SMP admirably. Roger joined the program in 1987, while Erik started in 1997. There are similar programs at some universities, such as the University of Michigan, UIUC, and Texas A&M. Information about the current Fermilab program can be found at <https://indico.fnal.gov/conferenceDisplay.py?confId=4692>. The program each Saturday consists of a two hour lecture followed by a one hour tour of a place like D0, SiDet, g-2, FAST, MTF, and so on. The students are responsible for getting themselves out to the tour location, since there are no resources for moving them with official transportation. Fermilab postdocs are asked to contribute by running one tour per session, the time slots are now determined using a Doodle poll.

Erik is phasing out of his role in the program, and the FSPA can't make the type of long-

term commitment needed to keep the program going. Erik is looking for any guidance the UEC might be able to provide. There are pressing questions, such as how to get new leadership. There is modest financial support now from the Directorate: they pay Suzanne but she is moving to a new role. The UEC raised the questions as to whether the Directorate could maybe also chip in on transport to tour sites. Another way the laboratory could support this outreach activity is to allow the SMP work on Saturdays to count as regular working hours for payroll purposes. It was suggested that young university faculty would be ideal for taking on a role in SMP, since they are often looking for meaningful outreach activities. Participation in outreach is often an important portion of NSF proposals. Fermilab staff could umbrella the program. The Lederman fellows could be tapped for help; there are two to three Lederman fellows on site per year

Report from the Directorate

Tim Meyer reported for the Directorate. The Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota is visiting Fermilab today. The lab is getting a lot of support from South Dakota, as they work through the undersecretary to get the recommendation for CD-3a for LBNF.

There is now a contract with Taher Inc., a new management company to handle food on site, replacing Southern Foodservice. There will be an opportunity to interact with an on-site representative. The hours will remain the same for now. There is still not service on weekends, but that could change since there is more flexibility in the contract. There may also be options to add other restaurants on site. The Frontier Pub is losing less and less money as time goes on. It is not in the black yet, but people are learning a lot. It is now possible to do phone orders (for example, the operators could order ribs).

Sarah asked whether the lab could have an All Hands meeting during the time frame of next year's User's Meeting. This overlap could bring more people together. The sub-committee is trying to improve the content of User's Meeting. In order to find out what might be attractive, perhaps meeting with the Division Heads would be useful. Katie said that they are hiring a short-term event manager for the lab's 50th anniversary. People will be working a lot harder on it after ICHEP (in two more weeks).

Report from Washington

Leland Cogliani of Lewis-Burke Associates reported on the news from Washington. Congress is now in recess for seven weeks, through the Labor Day holiday. They did not meet their original goal of passing a number of appropriations bills. The Appropriations Committee completed twelve bills on the House and Senate sides. There will be three weeks to discuss appropriations or a Continuing Resolution (CR). The defense bill failed on the Senate side, because it did not stick to the original budget caps, and also because of policy riders (LGBT, environmental issues). Conservative Republicans want a six-month CR, and don't want to work with a lame duck president. Leadership Ryan and

McConnell, as well as committee leaders Rogers, Nikolsky and Cochran, favor a three-month CR followed by an Omnibus in December. Congressman Nikolsky will not be running again and wants to leave his mark; Congressman Rogers is at his term limit and also wants to leave his imprint. Under the CR scenario, the LBNF construction might not move forward, as no new projects are then allowed to start, but this needs to be verified. One way around it might be to provide an anomaly to the CR that focuses on language to give FNAL the flexibility to award a construction contract, even though there are not yet funds to begin the construction. Then, if the final Omnibus bill has higher funding for HEP/LBNF, there would be funding relief, and in January or February funds could be moved into construction. The staff will start work in November to have a package available on which to vote. So, September is a good time to target members of Congress and their staff, focusing on the Omnibus negotiations and asking for support of the Senate mark of \$833M. This would enable moving forward on all P5 projects, not just those of Fermilab's concern. HEP is continuing to get the support of Congressional staff.

The future of ITER funding potentially impacts HEP. The Secretary of Energy submitted his report, which recommended continuing with ITER for two more years and then reassess. The Senate mark for HEP is higher because they zeroed ITER, so if that \$100M commitment is added back to the Office of Science, it may be difficult to keep the higher HEP number. However, the House managed to increase HEP funds without zeroing ITER. Leland says that it is important to keep the HEP number as high as possible, independent of ITER. Funding for ITER is a major point of discussion, and a tough negotiation. New Jersey is in favor of ITER, and a representative from New Jersey will take over as head of the Appropriations Committee next year. The State Department is a major supporter of ITER, and worried about the consequences of backing out of a global agreement. LBNF is a different case than ITER since it has a completely different management structure. It follows the CERN/LHC model, in which there are specific pieces of work each country is responsible for, rather than cash contributions from the other nations.

Lynn Orr stopped at SURF to tour the underground facility while he was on vacation, and he is supportive of LBNF. Once LBNF has its own budget line, it will be easier to keep it going. It is hoped that DOE approval for CD-3A will happen in September, so that it can go to Congress where approval will still be needed. The focus will be on getting the anomaly in the CR in order to facilitate future construction.

User's Meeting Sub-Committee

Sarah reported for the User's Meeting sub-committee. There was an attendance uptick of 551 at the User's Meeting this year, as compared to 419 in 2015, 520 in 2014, 523 in 2013, 446 in 2012, and 473 in 2011. The sub-committee has met with the Conference Office twice since the User's Meeting. The question arose as to whether New

Perspectives and the User's Meeting need a more comprehensive approach. In dealing with them separately, some things are double charged. The Conference Office would also like to have a suggestion box at the meeting, and could possibly do a survey. This year there were fewer people the second day, so perhaps that part of the meeting could be made shorter. It may be desirable to separate the dinner and the public lecture, since that is a lot to do at once. The program book was popular, only one remained at the end of the conference. Although it was a lot of work, the template has been saved, so hopefully it will be easier in the future. Next year the poster session judges could use a template for reviewing, and the cut-off date for printing should be one week before printing.

Although there were comments that the dinner lines were long, 400 people were served in 40 minutes, and there was still some food left over. A reception could help the line size and manage the flow of attendees. Also, guests for the dinner should be accounted for differently than they have been. It would be better not to require signing up for the conference just to get the dinner; instead, the actual meeting attendee could list the number of guests when he or she signs up for the conference. The number of wine tickets used was 191; while beer was 313; and dinner tickets numbered 343 (not counting late arrivals). Note that 15 cases of Two Brothers beer were donated and gratefully quaffed.

The vendors had some requests for next year. They asked for a session or a platform where they can talk about their products; and they would especially like to talk to technicians and engineering staff. They recommend a shorter length of 1 to 1.5 days. They also wanted to have more information about the conference (talks, posters, Festa Italiana). The vendors were happy that they were all in one area and also that they could get on site easily. They loved the tours!

Plans for next year were briefly discussed. It is felt that there is not a very large attendance from the Fermilab employees, and the question is what could be done to encourage their participation. Perhaps renaming the User's Meeting the Annual Meeting, or including the All Hands meeting as part of the venue. The question came up as to how Fermilab handles the participation of lab employees. Is there a charge of some kind? Do those hours count as vacation? It would be good to get a statement from the Directorate delineating how it is handled. Some dates which may be in conflict with the User's Meeting: the CERN Council dates are June 12-16; the WIN conference is the week of June 19th; and the conference on flavor physics and CP violation is the week of June 5th. There could be a two-page history of Fermilab in a booklet to help commemorate the 50th anniversary. A Public Speaker is needed by November.

Government Relations Sub-Committee

Jesus Orduna said there is no significant activity to report for this meeting.

Quality of Life Sub-Committee

Minerba reported on the Quality of Life sub-committee activities. There has been feedback that the new events at the User's Center are good. The Candlewood Suites staff is happy that they now have 350 nights reserved from people associated with Fermilab. They are willing to have an open house for FNAL people to check out their facilities, if that is desired. The Housing Office has sent 25 to 35 emails to users with information about the Candlewood Suites so far. If a stay there is longer than thirty days, it costs \$69 per night, for shorter stays they charge at the government rate. Ed suggested that Fermilab should have some prioritization as to who is on site, rather than awarding on-site housing on a first-come first-serve basis.

Office space at Fermilab is still very tight. There are too many post docs on floors 10 and 12 (for example, there are 11 post docs in one office). A working group has been started to evaluate office space in Wilson Hall. The initial goal is to collect statistics, such as which offices are actually used regularly. Parking is congested in the summer, and some users are not aware that there is overflow parking at the Lederman Science Center or other nearby places. Additional signage might be useful for directing people there.

Fermilab Student and Postdoc Association report

Sebastian Aderhold reported for the FSPA. Now there is an FSPA representative on the Campus and Facility Planning board (Rob Fine for one year). The Brazilian BBQ event, subsidized by FSPA, was last week. This was one of the first occasions using the new model to support events organized outside the group. FSPA helped with funding and also with the paperwork. The event was a big success and was well attended. It was open to everybody, although advertising focused on young people. In the future it may be good to state clearly that 'everybody is welcome' somewhere in the advertising. The FSPA is working on having more events like this during the summer. FSPA elections will be sometime after UEC elections in early fall

The meeting was adjourned.

Linda Spentzouris, UEC secretary